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New York

President:	Mr. Gaspar Martins	(Angola)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Chungong Ayafor
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Cheng Jingye
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. von Ungern-Sternberg
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Mexico	Mr. De Alba
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Atieh
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

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03-62823 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 4.35 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 37 of its provisional rules of procedure to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Nana Akufo-Addo and the delegation of the Economic Community of West African States took seats at the Council table.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana, as well as to His Excellency Mr. Mamadou Bamba, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. François Lonsény Fall, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guinea, Mr. Oluyemi Adeniji, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria and Mr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Senegal.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure His Excellency, Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council I extend a warm welcome to the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, and invite him to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, at this meeting, and I give him the floor.

The Secretary-General (*spoke in French*): May I first of all commend the leaders of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and in particular Presidents Kufuor and Obasanjo on their tireless efforts to find a solution to the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. I also wish to thank all of those countries that have provided contingents to the ECOWAS mission in Côte d'Ivoire. They are fulfilling their mandate in extremely difficult conditions, but thanks to them and to the French forces of the Licorne operation, an escalation of the conflict has, thus far, been avoided. However, I am deeply concerned by the current political stalemate created by the withdrawal of the Forces nouvelles from the Government of National Reconciliation on 23 September. Unless urgent steps are taken to resolve that impasse, the tenuous security situation in the country could deteriorate still further.

Already, there are signs that the situation in some parts of the northern provinces controlled by the Forces Nouvelles is degenerating into lawlessness. Tension between the Forces nouvelles and the Forces armées nationales de Côte d'Ivoire is also escalating. In that context, the Forces nouvelles has declared a state of emergency in areas under their control, and accused President Gbagbo of preparing to attack their positions. There is clearly a danger that Côte d'Ivoire could slip back into conflict.

I was pleased to note, however, that, during the summit of seven ECOWAS leaders held in Accra on 11 November, President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Diarra worked closely together to ensure that the Government of National Reconciliation is able to function and to implement the work programme developed by the Government last May. It is indeed essential that the Government be able to carry out the tasks assigned to it under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement with the necessary means and authority.

The undertakings made by the President and Prime Minister in Accra must be matched by deeds. In this regard, all parties concerned must demonstrate genuine political will to honour their commitments and implement the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement in good faith.

In order to jump-start the stalled peace process, the parties must tackle the fundamental issues behind the deadlock. As indicated in my latest report to the Security Council, issued on 4 November,

implementation of the key provisions of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement must begin without delay.

I urge the Ivorian parties to take the key measures identified in that report immediately. Those measures include the following: the Forces nouvelles must rejoin the Government of National Reconciliation without delay; all parties must accept the Government of National Reconciliation as fully constituted after the appointment of the Defence and Security Ministers on 12 September; all militias must begin to disband immediately; the armed groups must be cantoned and disarmed as soon as possible, while at the same time the country's security forces are restructured; the de facto partition of the country must end at once; and the National Assembly must adopt, as soon as possible, the reforms proposed in the Government's work programme.

The United Nations reaffirms its commitment to continue to work closely with ECOWAS in the pursuit of peace in Côte d'Ivoire and to help implement the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. I intend to send an assessment mission to Côte d'Ivoire soon to review the situation on the ground, so that I can prepare recommendations for the consideration of the Council, pursuant to resolution 1514 (2003), which requested me to report on how efforts of the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire to facilitate peace and stability in Côte d'Ivoire might be improved, including through the possible reinforcement of the United Nations presence in the country.

Finally, let me appeal once again to all the members of this Council, and to the international community as a whole, to remain engaged in Côte d'Ivoire and to provide the necessary support to enable the ECOWAS forces to continue their useful work in that country.

The President: At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana and the current Chairman and the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, respectively. Thereafter, the Security Council will hold a private meeting with the ECOWAS delegation at which Council members may ask questions.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana, His Excellency Mr. Nana Akufo-Addo.

Mr. Akufo-Addo (Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana): I must begin first, Mr. President, by congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of November and to thank you and members of the Security Council for receiving once more a ministerial delegation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Mediation and Security Council on such short notice. That is yet another sign of the support and concern of the Security Council for matters concerning ECOWAS and we are grateful for that.

Today's delegation from ECOWAS is composed of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Mamadou Bamba; the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Guinea, Mr. François Fall; the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Ambassador Olu Adeniji, an old friend of this Organization; the Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States, Mr. Mohamed Chambas; and myself, Nana Akufo-Addo, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Ghana and Chairman of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council. The delegation is fortified by the presence here in the Council Chamber of Mr. Albert Tevoedjre, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Côte d'Ivoire and Chairman of the Monitoring Committee (*Comité de Suivi*), Ambassador Raph Uwechue, Special Representative of the ECOWAS Executive Secretary in Côte d'Ivoire and member of the Monitoring Committee, and Colonel R. O. Sackey, Deputy Commander of the ECOWAS Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (ECOMICI).

We are here today to brief the Security Council on current developments in the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. You may recall that earlier this year a ministerial delegation of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council that I was privileged to lead had the honour of addressing this august body on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. Since then ECOWAS has continued to benefit from the support of the United Nations in general, and that of the Security Council, in particular, by its endorsement of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement in resolution 1464 (2003) of 4 February 2003 and the establishment of the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI) by resolution 1479 (2003) of 13 May 2003. Since then, some of the terms of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement were subsequently clarified by the provisions of the Accra II Accord.

Significant progress has been made towards the restoration of peace in Côte d'Ivoire, notably by: the joint declaration of a cessation of hostilities by the National Armed Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Forces nouvelles and the establishment of a Joint Reunification Committee; the formation of the Government of National Reconciliation; the promulgation of the amnesty law by the National Assembly; the progressive re-establishment of State authority in several parts of the country; the elaboration of draft laws relating to the various issues addressed by the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement; and the setting up of a National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration.

Despite this progress, the peace process has faced certain difficulties such as disagreement over the appointment of certain Government officials and heads of Government corporations; concerns over the personal safety of members of the Government of National Reconciliation; the persistence of provocative demonstrations and inflammatory statements by the various parties; the delay in the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process; the delay in returning the country to normality as a result of the continued de facto partitioning of the country; and the non-delegation to the consensually chosen Prime Minister of the required executive prerogatives for the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Accord. These difficulties have resulted in the suspension by the Forces nouvelles of their participation in the Government of National Reconciliation, the Council of Ministers and the DDR programme.

It has, therefore, become imperative to find a rapid solution to these difficulties to ensure that there is no further deterioration of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. The social and economic development of the country may then be compromised, the suffering of the people unduly prolonged and the stability of the West African region again jeopardized. There is, thus, a need to reinforce initiatives aimed at facilitating and accelerating the implementation of the confidence-building measures provided in the Linas-Marcoussis and Accra Accords and thereby creating a momentum for the implementation of these agreements.

Concerned by this situation, the Chairman of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency John Agyekum Kufuor, convened in Accra on 11 November 2003, a consultative closed-door meeting of some Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, comprising President Mathieu Kérékou of Benin, President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, President Laurent Gbagbo of Côte d'Ivoire, President Tandja Mamadou of Niger, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and President Gnassingbé Eyadema of Togo in order to consider the security situation in West Africa, and in particular the situation in Côte d'Ivoire.

The Heads of State emphasized the need for the President and the Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire to work closely together to ensure that the Government of National Reconciliation is able to function as a team and implement the programme of work drawn up; the need to guarantee the security of the members of the Government of National Reconciliation by immediate strengthening of the ECOWAS Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (ECOMICI) VIP Protection Unit; the responsibility of the Ivorian political class for the excesses of the media and the need for the class to contribute effectively together with civil society to the reinforcement of the process of national reconciliation; and the need for close and harmonious relations among the States of West Africa to enhance the security of the region and help hasten the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire.

The Heads of State concluded with the view that the presence of a robust peacekeeping force, capable of securing the entire national territory, would contribute greatly to the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Accord. ECOWAS, unfortunately, does not dispose of the means required to raise and maintain such a force. It had, thus, become necessary for the United Nations to consider the transformation of the ECOMICI into a full-fledged United Nations peacekeeping force.

The meeting, involving a frank exchange of views, ended on a positive note, which permitted three days later the Ivorian Prime Minister, Seydou Diarra, to go to Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, to meet with the Faso President, His Excellency Blaise Compaoré. The meeting was successful. This process of rapprochement has to be warmly welcomed and encouraged for it represents the best way to peace and stability in the region. It is in the same vein that, given the assurances and undertakings that flowed from the meeting, we anticipate the imminent return of the Forces nouvelles to full participation in the

Government of National Reconciliation, an event which will give greater impetus to the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Accord.

It is worth reiterating that insecurity in Côte d'Ivoire has remained the real threat to the peace process. Various sources have alleged that the various parties are strengthening their positions militarily in the eventuality of a resumption of hostilities. It is vital for peace in Côte d'Ivoire that dialogue, accommodation and reconciliation, and not the resort to force, remain for the parties the means for the resolution of the crisis. All measures should be taken in order to continue to secure the ceasefire and to implement the security provisions of the Linas-Marcoussis Accord. ECOWAS, for its part, continues to work closely with the French troops of Operation Licorne to secure the line of separation between the belligerents. ECOWAS has also decided to deploy immediately 80 additional policemen to augment the personal security of the Ministers of the Government of National Reconciliation. These efforts need now to be supported by a stronger and wider engagement of the international community.

I wish to renew once again our sincere appreciation to the Security Council for all its efforts and attention to the West African region and request that the Security Council consider the possibility of establishing a United Nations peacekeeping force in Côte d'Ivoire and of transforming the ECOWAS mission in Côte d'Ivoire into part of this United Nations peacekeeping force. We strongly believe that this step will be decisive for the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. Indeed and in addition, there appears to be virtual unanimity amongst the principal actors of the Ivorian crisis from the President of the Republic, His Excellency Laurent Gbagbo, and the Prime Minister, Seydou Diarra, through to the former President of the Republic and leader of the Parti démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI), Henri Konan Bedie, the former Prime Minister and leader of the Rassemblement démocratique africain (RDA), Allasane Ouattara, and the Minister of State and leader of the Forces nouvelles, Guillaume Soro, about the need for such a step. Once again, the region is ready to contribute to this peacekeeping force and work closely with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the implementation of its mandate.

I cannot end without appealing to the proverbial sense of humanity and solidarity of this great institution, the Security Council of the United Nations. Despite the current difficulties confronting them, the peoples of West Africa are determined to be part of the global movement for democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. They need your patience and assistance at this critical juncture of their history, and I am confident that, in the end, they will not disappoint you.

I wish to thank you, President and Members of the Security Council, for your kind attention.

Mr. Ibn Chambas (Economic Community of West African States): I wish to join Hon. Nana Akufo-Addo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana, in expressing our appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to the other members of the Security Council for granting us another opportunity to address you on the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, a matter of grave concern to peoples of the West African subregion.

I wish to underscore the economic consequences of the war for Côte d'Ivoire and the other countries of the subregion, and particularly the social and economic dimension of the dangers posed if the crisis continues.

Since the outbreak of the crisis on 19 September 2002, the economic and social situation in Côte d'Ivoire and the neighbouring countries has continued to deteriorate. The gross domestic product (GDP) growth of Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger has fallen as trade amongst those countries has been disrupted. The economy of Côte d'Ivoire, which is the second largest in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) subregion after Nigeria, represents approximately 13 per cent of the GDP of West Africa. The country has a population of about 16.6 million, with a 27 per cent immigrant component originating mainly from neighbouring countries. Côte d'Ivoire exports agricultural, agro-industrial and manufactured goods to its neighbours and is a major destination for livestock products from the countries of the Sahel. It is the leading world producer of cocoa and one of the major producers of coffee, hevea and palm oil.

At 30 per cent of the total volume of trade with ECOWAS countries, Côte d'Ivoire dominates intra-regional trade. In 2001, exports to other ECOWAS countries represented 33 per cent of total export figures, while imports represented 27 per cent. This is in comparison to an average intra-ECOWAS trade of about 15 per cent. Its port network of infrastructure and

geographical position have combined to make Côte d'Ivoire a transit corridor for goods and travellers within the West African subregion. The country also plays host to a substantial number of West African workers and traders, who transfer a considerable volume of funds to their home countries.

These are compelling reasons why the restoration of peace and stability to Côte d'Ivoire is a sine qua non for the stability and development of the rest of the subregion, and in particular the consolidation of the fledgling democracies in West Africa. The continuing unrest in Côte d'Ivoire is a cause for legitimate concern to both the leaders and peoples of the West African subregion.

Despite the considerable efforts deployed within the subregion by ECOWAS, the fact remains that the crisis rumbles on and, indeed, there are troubling signs that the situation is deteriorating. The existence of bands of armed groups, whose activities extend beyond the Ivorian borders and threaten the successful efforts of the international community to bring peace to Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, should galvanize us all to act decisively to curtail their activities.

There is, therefore, a need to secure Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone as a single undertaking. We should adopt a comprehensive regional approach to the crisis in those countries. ECOWAS is therefore calling on the Security Council to work with us in a concerted effort to restore peace and stability to Côte d'Ivoire, thereby consolidating the gains made in Sierra Leone and, lately, in Liberia. For this, we need to back political action by the presence of a robust peacekeeping force in order to create an enabling environment for dialogue, national reconciliation and the speedy and full implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, which remains for us the sole framework for the resolution of the crisis.

ECOWAS is confident that it can, as usual, rely on the support of the Security Council in its efforts to secure a lasting peace in Côte d'Ivoire and will appreciate any initiatives that the Council might wish to take in order to revive the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire.

Peace in Côte d'Ivoire is inextricably linked to lasting peace in Sierra Leone, Liberia and, indeed, all of West Africa. Once again, we thank the Council for its deep interest in the preservation of peace and security in West Africa and for the honour done us in giving us the opportunity to address this body.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I should now like to invite Council members to a private meeting to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.